chilly growers on quality management and improved post-harvest handling of chillies with emphasis on need based application of pesticides.

(iii) Supply of HDPE sheets at subsidised rates to chilly growers to over come problem of fungal infestation, resulting in the occurrence of afflatoxins in chillies.

WTO Conference at Singapore

899. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJI-RAO SHINDE: SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: DR. B.B. DUTTA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the specific subjects which were discussed and decisions taken at the first Ministeral Conference of World Trade Organisation held in Singapore in December, 1996;

(b) the Indian representatives stand at the Conference on each subject; and

(c) the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The first Ministerial Conference held in Singapore in December, 1996 was the culmination of a series of negotiations that had taken place in Geneva prior to the Conference. The specific subjects discussed on which decisions were taken at Singapore were as follows:—

(1) Core Labour Standards:—

It was decided that the ILO is the competent body to set and deal with Core Labour Standards. It was further decided to reject the use of Labour Standards for protectionist purposes and it was agreed that the comparative advantage of low wage developing countries would in no way be put into question.

(2) Investment and Competition:—

It was decided that having regard to the existing WTO provisions on matters related to Investment and Competition Policy and the built-in agenda in these areas, including under the TRIMS agreement, two working Groups would be set up in the WTO to examine the relationship between Trade and Investment and Trade and Competition Policy respectively. While the work of these Groups is to be reviewed after two years, it was made clear that future negotiations, if any, regarding multilateral disciplines in these areas, will take place only after an explicit consensus decision is taken among WTO Members regarding such negotiations.

(3) Transparency in Government Procurement:—

It was decided to establish a Working Group to conduct a study on Transparency in Government Procurement practices, taking into account national policies and based on this study, to develop elements for inclusion in an appropriate agreement,

(4) Trade Facilitation:—

It was decided to direct the WTO to undertake exploratory and analytical work on the simplification of trade procedures in order to assess the scope for WTO rules in this area.

(b) and (c) The stand of the Indian Delegation at the Conference, which had the approval of the Government, was to agree to the above decisions, after the text of the Singapore Ministerial-Declaration had fully met India's concerns on each subjects discussed in para (a) above.

चीनी का निर्यात

900. **श्री सोमपाल** : क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या कृषि उत्पाद निर्यात विकास अभिकरण (एपीडा) ने चीनी के निर्यात हेतु हाल ही में कोई नई नियामावली बनाई है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा और तर्काधार क्या है?

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (डा. बोला बुल्ली रमैया) : (क) तथा (ख) कृषि एंव प्रसंस्कृत खाद्य उत्पाद निर्यात विकास प्राधिकरण (एपीडा) ने 2,50,000 मीट्रिक टन चीनी के निर्यात के लिए पंजीकरण